



**U.S. Department of Justice**

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**For Immediate Release:**

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**EVENT: Indictment and Complaints**

**Defendant: Myron L. Hooker et al**

**20 INDIVIDUALS CHARGED IN MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR MORTGAGE FRAUD SCHEME**

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Myron L. Hooker, Jr., 39 of Southfield, Peter Garland, 36 of Southfield, Nicole Jackson, 34 of Southfield, Antwan Mcrae, 31 of Detroit, Keith Lakey, 43 of West Bloomfield, and Monique Bankhead, 32 of Detroit, have been indicted by a federal grand jury on charges of wire fraud, mail fraud and conspiracy to commit those offenses, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today.

In addition, Michael Bigbee, 27 of Detroit, Elbe White, 33 of Southfield, Tyrone Claybrook, 33 of Detroit, Chad Evans, 38 of Grosse Pointe Park, Sylvester Hickson, 56 of Southgate, Darrick McCaster, 36 of Southfield, Kara Motley, 38 of Detroit, Yolanda Lance, 33 of Southfield, Jennie Moore, 24 of Farmington Hills, Maxine Matthews, 62 of Detroit, Jerry Matthews, 34 of Oak Park, Timothy Nowc, 35 of Westland, Rex Reddick, 37 of Woodland Hills, California, and Jeffrey Stillman, 45 of West Bloomfield, were charged in criminal complaints with wire fraud and mail fraud, based upon similar allegations arising from this investigation.

Murphy was joined in the announcement by Daniel D. Roberts, FBI Special Agent in Charge.

The 20-count Indictment charges that from January, 2003, through the date of the indictment, these defendants and other conspirators devised a scheme to defraud and to obtain money from various lending institutions, banks and individuals in the Detroit Metropolitan area through mortgage fraud. The indictment alleges that the defendants conspired to obtain fraudulent mortgage loans on numerous properties and arranged to have the illegal proceeds of the fraud split, in varying proportions among themselves.

According to the Indictment, defendants Hooker and Garland orchestrated the fraud by coordinating and directing the activities of loan officers, straw buyers, collusive sellers, real estate appraisers, and closing agents, some of whom are also charged in the indictment. For instance, Hooker and Garland obtained falsely inflated appraisals on real estate and paid straw buyers to act as purchasers of the property. To bolster the straw buyer's credit-worthiness, false income and asset documentation was provided by Hooker and Garland. Relying on the falsely inflated appraisals and fraudulent documentation, lending institutions approved and disbursed loans. These loans often subsequently went into default leaving the lending institutions with insufficient collateral and substantial losses.

The affidavits filed in support the criminal complaints also allege mortgage fraud schemes intended to defraud financial institutions, lending companies and individuals in the Detroit Metropolitan area and elsewhere. The named defendants played various roles in the schemes including processing fraudulent loan applications, recruiting straw buyers, arranging for falsely inflated appraisals, and receiving illegal kickbacks from loan proceeds.

"Honesty and integrity in the mortgage lending business are crucial to protecting home owners, lending institutions, and borrowers. When mortgage fraud is widespread, it undermines the stability of the housing market and the ability of lending institutions to protect

themselves from debilitating losses. With these charges, we are telling the fraudulent mortgage dealers: what you're doing is a crime, and we will prosecute you for it." Attorney Murphy said.

Daniel D. Roberts, FBI Special Agent in Charge said, "The mortgage fraud problem continues to escalate, but the FBI is committed to aggressively pursuing these cases utilizing sophisticated investigative techniques, such as undercover operations. As reflected by today's charges, mortgage fraud generally requires "insider" involvement, so the FBI has found that undercover operations are highly effective in uncovering those criminal acts. The mortgage fraud problem is a priority for the FBI."

Indictments and complaints are only charges and are not evidence of guilt. Every defendant is entitled to a fair trial in which it will be the government's burden to prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

The case was investigated by special agents of the FBI and would not have been possible without the assistance and support of LaSalle Bank during the investigation. U.S. Attorney Stephen J. Murphy commended to efforts of the agents and bank personnel for their hard work and dedication to this case.